

Message Text

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46

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 SAM-01 ORM-02 OMB-01

VO-03 INSE-00 SCA-01 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 L-03 H-02

PRS-01 PA-02 USIA-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /098 W

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R 221639Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9914

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENNA 8864

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SREF, UR, IS, AU

SUBJECT: AUSTRO-ISRAELI CONFRONTATION OVER SOVIET JEWISH
EMIGRATION FORECASTED

1. VIENNA'S DAILY "KURIER" OF OCTOBER 22 - IN DETAILED
ARTICLE ON GROWING TREND OF SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRES TO GO TO
US RATHER THAN ISRAEL, ISRAELI PLANS TO COUNTERACT THIS TREND,
AND AUSTRIAN RESISTANCE TO SUCH PLANS - CONCLUDES THAT
CONFRONTATION BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND ISRAEL ON JEWISH
EMIGRE ISSUE SEEMS ASSURED. ARTICLE QUOTES CHANCELLOR KREISKY
TO EFFECT THAT AUSTRIAN POLICY OF ASSISTING EMIGRATION OF
SOVIET JEWS IS CONTINGENT UPON MAINTAINING RIGHT OF EMIGRES
TO PROCEED FROM AUSTRIA TO OTHER COUNTRIES THAN ISRAEL.
ARTICLE USES NUMBER OF DIRECT QUOTATIONS TO "SPELL OUT"
PRINCIPLES CHANCELLOR IS APPLYING IN AUSTRIAN POLICY
ON THIS ISSUE. INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF ARTICLE (PARA
NUMBERS FOR TRANSMISSION ONLY) FOLLOWS:

2. (LEAD-IN). BEGIN QUOTE AUSTRIA AND ISRAEL ARE
BOUND FOR A NEW CRISIS. ALARMED BY RECORD NUMBERS OF
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"APOSTATE" SOVIET JEWS WHO, EN ROUTE TO ISRAEL, DEFECT

IN VIENNA, THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL NOW WANTS TO TAKE DRASTIC STEPS. AUSTRIA, HOWEVER, SEEKING TO PRESERVE ITS REPUTATION OF A FREE SANCTUARY, DOES NOT GO ALONG. CHANCELLOR KREISKY TOLD THE "KURIER" - 'WE SHALL NEVER BE EXECUTORS OF SUCH CURTAILMENTS*'

3. (HEADING) THE ROW ABOUT THE LOST SONS (SUB-HEADING) VIENNA AND JERUSALEM AT LOGGER HEADS OVER SOVIET JEWS.

4. SOME 250,000 JEWS FROM EASTERN EUROPE EMIGRATED TO ISRAEL VIA VIENNA IN THE PAST 20 YEARS. AUSTRIA HAS BEEN THE FIRST RESTING PLACE IN FREEDOM FOR THIS SILENT PROCESSION AND AN IRREPLACEABLE PARTNER FOR ISRAEL. FOR IT WAS ONLY THROUGH VIENNA THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WANTED TO LEAD THIS STREAM OF UNLOVED EMIGRANTS TO WHOM IT HAD TO OPEN ITS BORDERS UNDER WESTERN PRESSURE. "FAMILY REUNION" - THIS IS THE MOTTO OF THE JEWISH EXODUS TO ISRAEL, EVEN IF NOT EVERY EMIGRANT DOES HAVE RELATIVES IN THE JEWISH STATE.

5. AUSTRIA AS A SANCTUARY MADE WORLD HEADLINES THREE TIMES ALREADY: 20 YEARS AGO, WHEN SOME 2000,000 HUNGARIANS FLED AND CROSSED THE BORDER; IN 1968, WHEN TENS OF THOUSANDS OF CZECHOSLOVAKS FLED THE SOVIETS; AND IN THE FALL OF 1973 WHEN ARAB TERRORISTS FORCED THE CLOSING OF THE SCHOENAU TRANSIT CAMP. AT THAT TIME, ISRAEL'S GOVERNMENT CHIEF GOLDA MEIR IMploRED CHANCELLOR KREISKY IN VIENNA: 'IF YOU REALLY WANT TO CLOSE DOWN SCHOENAU, YOU WILL PROVIDE THE SOVIETS WITH A PERFECT EXCUSE FOR NOT LETTING THE JEWS EMIGRATE ANY MORE.'

6. NOW, THREE YEARS LATER, THE SAME WORDS COULD BE REPEATED. AGAIN, ISRAEL IS HIGHLY EXCITED ABOUT THE EMIGRATION OF SOVIET JEWS. AGAIN, A HALT TO EMIGRATION FROM THE USSR IS FEARED. AND AGAIN, CHANCELLOR KREISKY IS SETTING HIS FACE AGAINST ISRAELI PRESSURE.

7. THE 'DISASTER' - WHAT HAS HAPPENED? THE DEFECTION OF EMIGRATING SOVIET JEWS WHO HAVE ISRAELI VISAS BUT DO UNCLASSIFIED

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NOT WANT TO GO TO ISRAEL HAS ASSUMED 'DISASTROUS PROPORTIONS,' ACCORDING TO ISRAELI NEWSPAPERS. THE FIGURES WHICH THE "JURIER" GOT FROM ISRAEL ARE STRIKING ENOUGH: IN 1971, ONLY 0.4 PERCENT OF ALL TRANSMIGRANT JEWS REFUSED TO CONTINUE TO ISRAEL; IN 1972, 0.7 PERCENT; IN 1973, 4.5 PERCENT. BUT THEN IT BEGAN: IN 1974, 18.7 PERCENT DEFECTED, IN 1975 THE FIGURE SOARED TO 37 PERCENT, AND IN THE FIRST HALF OF

1976, 46 PERCENT WERE UNWILLING TO BOARD THE SPECIAL PLANE TO ISRAEL. IN SEPTEMBER, THE FIGURE WAS ALREADY OVER 50 PERCENT.

8. THERE HAS BEEN ONE SPECIAL PHENOMENON: EMIGRANTS FROM THE FOUR BIGGEST CITIES OF THE USSR (MOSCOW, LENINGRAD, KIEV, LDESSA) ARE VIRTUALLY UNANIMOUS IN REFUSING SETTLEMENT IN ISRAEL. HERE THE DEFECTION FIGURES ARE OVER 90 PERCENT. THEY ALL DID APPLY FOR ISRAELI VISAS, BUT IN VIENNA THEY NAME A DIFFERENT AIM OF THEIR DREAMS: USUALLY AMERICA.

9. IN ISRAEL, AN EIGHT-MEMBER COMMITTEE HAS BEEN IN SESSION FOR WEEKS, STRUGGLING FOR DECISIONS. THE RUSSIAN EMIGRE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE JEWISH STATE ARE DEEPLY SPLIT. IN JERUSALEM AND VIENNA, A PHILOSOPHIC WAR OF JEWISH REFUGEE ORGANIZATIONS IS ABOUT TO BREAK OUT. BESIDES THE INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN "JEWISH AGENCY"

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WHICH ASSISTS IN IMMIGRATION TO ISRAEL, THERE IS THE "HIAS/ (HEBREW IMMIGRANT AID SOCIETY) WHICH MAINLY

HELPS EASTERN EMIGRANTS GO TO THE UNITED STATES.

10. ISRAEL, WHOSE CONSTITUTIONAL TASK IS TO BRING HOME A PEOPLE SCATTERED ALL OVER THE WORLD, IS WATCHING THIS DEVELOPMENT IN VIENNA WITH INCREASING CONCERN, AND NOT ONLY SO FOR CONSTITUTIONAL REASONS. IT SAYS THAT THE KREMLIN COULD USE THE EMIGRANTS' REFUSAL TO CONTINUE TO JERUSALM AS A PRETEXT FOR STOPPING THE WHOLE EMIGRE FLOW. THEN THE ACTUAL GOAL OF FAMILY REUNION WOULD NOT BE REACHED ANY MORE. 'THE DEFECTORS CHEAT THE ISRAELIS AND THE SOVIETS,' SAID THE "JERUSALEM POST" RECENTLY.

11. BUT THERE ARE STILL OTHER ARGUMENTS: THOSE GOING TO AMERICA USE UP THE KREMLIN-FIXED EMIGRATION QUOTAS OF THOSE SOVIET JEWS WHO REALLY WAIT DESPERATELY FOR THE FLIGHT TO ISRAEL. AND ISRAELI AUTHORITIES EVEN FEAR THAT IN VIEW OF THE LARGE-SCALE "DEFECTION" IN VIENNA, A NEW WAVE OF ANTI-SEMITISM MIGHT START IN UNCLASSIFIED

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THE SOVIET UNION. THE ORDINARY SOVIET CITIZEN WHOSE NEIGHBOR HAD DREAMED OF ISRAEL SO LONG UNTIL HE FINALLY RECEIVED THE EMIGRATION PERMIT WOULD HAVE TO DESPAIR OF THE JEWISH CHARACTER IF HIS NEIGHBOR WERE THEN ACTUALLY TO GO TO AMERICA.

12. AND THIS IS WHY JERUSALEM IS MAKING PLANS ON HOW TO TURN SOVIET EMIGRATION AGAIN INTO A ONE-WAY STREET. A DECISION APPEARS TO BE IMMINENT.

13. TWO POSSIBILITIES: TWO POSSIBILITIES ARE UNDER DISCUSSION: 1) STRICTER SELECTION OF THE SOVIET JEWS SEEKING EMIGRATION. PREFERENCE WOULD BE GIVEN TO THOSE REALLY DESIRING TO GO TO THE JEWISH STATE. THE PROBLEM: ISRAELI INVESTIGATIONS IN THE USSR ARE DIFFICULT AND BOUND TO LEAD TO INJUSTICES. IN ADDITION, ISRAEL WOULD HAVE TO BEAR THE ONUS OF NOT FIGHTING FOR ALL JEWS. 2) HIAS WOULD FOREGO RELIEF OPERATIONS IN VIENNA. WITHOUT THESE ECONOMIC AIDS AND WITHOUT US VISAS, THE EMIGRES WOULD BE PRACTICALLY FORCED TO GO TO ISRAEL. FROM THERE THEY STILL COULD GO, AT A LATER DATE, TO AMERICAN OR ELSEWHERE. THUS ISRAEL WOULD BECOME A "TRANSIT EXPERIMENTAL STATION."

14. THESE REORGANIZATION PLANS WOULD CALL FOR AUSTRIAN COOPERATION, BUT FOR REASONS EASY TO SEE BRUNO KREISKY IS NOT PREPARED (TO COOPERATE). HE SPELLED OUT HIS PRINCIPLE REPEATEDLY.

15. AT FIRST HE DID SO IN ADDRESSING FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS WHO COULD NOT, HOWEVER, UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT. KREISKY SAID: 'HE WHO COMES TO AUSTRIA IN ORDER TO PROCEED ONWARD WILL NOT ONLY BE ADMITTED, BUT WE WILL ALSO SEE TO IT THAT HIS RIGHT TO CHOOSE HIS COUNTRY OF DESTINATION WILL BE RESPECTED.'

16. IN A JEWISH PUBLICATION ("DAS JUEDISCHE ECHO"), KREISKY PUT IT EVEN MORE PRECISELY AND HARSHLY: 'THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THAT WHEN SOVIET CITIZENS OF JEWISH FAITH COME TO AUSTRIA THEY MUST GO ON TO ISRAEL. THIS IS QUITE WRONG. WE SEE TO IT THAT THEY CAN CHOOSE
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THEIR COUNTRY OF DESTINATION AND THAT THEY CAN ALSO STAY HERE UNTIL THEY HAVE THE RESPECTIVE COUNTRY'S ENTRY PERMIT. AUSTRIA WILL ONLY CONTINUE ITS ASSISTANCE POLICY IF THIS RIGHT OF UNINHIBITED ONWARD MIGRATION IS GUARANTEED FROM THE VERY START.'

17. AND THEN HE SAID QUITE UNEQUIVOCALLY: 'SHOULD THE OTHER SIDE DEMAND OF US THAT WE ONLY ADMIT SUCH PEOPLE WHO CONTINUE TO ISRAEL, WE WOULD DEFEND WITH THE SAME DETERMINATION EVERY INCOMING PERSON'S RIGHT OF UNINHIBITED ONWARD MIGRATION.'

18. HOW EXPLOSIVE THE ISSUE IS MAY BE GATHERED FROM A DETAIL. EARLY IN SEPTEMBER, TWO HIGH EMISSARIES FROM JERUSALEM CAME ON A SECRET MISSION: ZEEV SHEK, THE EAST EUROPEAN CHIEF OF THE ISRAELI MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND FORMER AMBASSADOR TO VIENNA; GENERAL UZZI NARKISS, CHIEF OF THE JEWISH AGENCY WHO HAD WON FAME IN THE SIX-DAY WAR AS COMMANDER OF THE JORDAN FRONT ARMIES. TO THE TWO ISRAELIS, THE MATTER WAS IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO TRACK MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR ROESCH TO HIS TAUPLITZ VACATION CHALET. THIS IS WHAT THEY DESIRED TO KNOW: HOW WILL AUSTRIA REACT TO THE VARIOUS MEASURES BEING CONSIDERED BY ISRAEL.

19. ROESCH: 'IT WAS A CONFIDENTIAL CONVERSATION. I CAN SAY NOTHING.' KREISKY TODAY, QUOTE IN A TACTICAL MANNER: 'I CANNOT IMAGINE THAT ISRAEL WILL REALLY DECIDE TO CURTAIL THE RIGHT OF UNINHIBITED ONWARD MIGRATION.' ISRAEL'S NEWSPAPERS ASSUME, HOWEVER, THAT 'A CONCRETE DECISION ON NEW FORMS OF IMMIGRATION IS IMMINENT.' THE CONFLICT SEEMS TO BE PROGRAMMED. END QUOTE. BUCHANAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: JEWS, PRESS COMMENTS, REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, EMIGRANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 OCT 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976VIENNA08864
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760400-0324
From: VIENNA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761021/aaaaasgd.tel
Line Count: 274
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2004 by DuboseBM>; APPROVED <05 JAN 2005 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AUSTRO-ISRAELI CONFRONTATION OVER SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRATION FORECASTED
TAGS: PFOR, SREF, UR, IS, AU, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006